

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: June 2, 2000

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on May 26, 2000

FROM: William E. Muno, Director
Superfund Division

TO: Francis X. Lyons
Regional Administrator

David A. Ullrich
Deputy Regional Administrator

The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities and training/conferences:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Response, Mercury Release, Westland, Michigan

On May 11, 2000, Joe Fredle of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Emergency Response Branch was contacted by the Wayne County Health Department for assistance in assessing the impact of a mercury (Hg) release from a standard Hg flask (about 100 pounds). The flask had been left in a residence when the elderly owner died. A youth employed by the house cleaning contractor took the flask. Some students put Hg in a school restroom, reportedly in an attempt to get the school closed. Other students played with Hg in a residence. The Westland Fire Department established a 24-hour hotline for residents. The school district, in cooperation with the police department, interviewed suspected students. On May 12, 2000, U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinator Bob Buckley, with Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) support, met with school, fire, police, County health and State health officials. The school/City had hired a cleanup contractor who identified mercury contamination in one residence and in an outdoor area in the nearby woods. At a home where Hg had been handled and where remediation was done by the private cleanup contractor, elevated readings were found in a vacuum cleaner, washing machine with clothes, and

in ambient air. Continuous air samples in the sleeping and living areas averaged just less than the 1 microgram per cubic meter Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) proposed criteria. The visible presence of extremely small beads as well as Jerome meter readings at ground level confirmed elemental mercury and mercury vapors. No other requests have come from Westland or the health department.

Contact: Bob Buckley (734-692-7662)

Emergency Response, Miller Middle School Mercury Spill, Detroit, Michigan

On May 8, 2000, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Jim Augustyn and U.S. EPA's Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) contractor responded to a request for assistance from the Michigan Department of Community Health to a mercury spill in a middle school. Students in a science classroom obtained a small glass container of mercury from a storage cabinet and spilled approximately 2 liquid ounces of elemental mercury on the wooden floor and on their seats. Mercury was tracked throughout the school on the soles of the student's shoes. OSC Jim Augustyn advised school officials to contact the parents and instruct them to place the shoes and clothing the students wore in separate plastic bags and bring them back to the school. Elevated mercury levels were found. The school's cleanup contractor initiated cleanup efforts throughout the school. The school was closed from May 9-12, 2000, for decontamination, and confirmation air sampling by the U.S. EPA Environmental Response Team's (ERC) contractor. START contractor screening indicated no mercury contamination at 46 residential properties, a hospital, a settlement, and a local youth center. The school was declared safe to reopen on May 15, 2000, by the City of Detroit Health Department, with exception of the science classroom. A public meeting was held on May 13, 2000. The school's contractor removed the wooden floor and cleaned the science classroom. Confirmation air samples received on May 20, 2000, confirmed that the classroom was cleaned to below the action level and was safe to be restored.

Contact: Jim Augustyn (440-250-1742)

PRPs Removal Action Start, 7&7 Merger Site, Wooster, Ohio

On May 15, 2000, a potentially responsible party (PRP) removal action was initiated at the 7&7 Merger site in Wooster, Ohio. On May 5, 2000, an Administrative Order by Consent for a group of PRPs to remediate the site became effective. The company, 7&7 Merger, Inc., had operated in hazardous waste transportation and cleanup; specializing in the recycling of coal-tar waste and coke by-products, primarily from the steel industry. Approximately 130 roll-off boxes of tar and coke by-product wastes, and other hazardous materials in various sized containers were left onsite when the facility ceased operations. Limited PRP removal activities have occurred at the site and have reduced the number of roll-off boxes to about 90. The site is comprised of an office building with an asphalt parking lot and a separate, fenced-in area. Within the fenced area is a large lot housing the 90 roll-off boxes with varying amounts of tar and tar-associated wastes, a maintenance garage, a flammable storage locker, and a laboratory/warehouse building. There are containers of wastes in both the laboratory/warehouse building (chemicals, cleaners, samples) and in the maintenance garage (maintenance-associated wastes). The flammable storage locker has various sized containers of flammable liquids. Removal actions are expected to take approximately 90 days to complete.

Contact: Jim Augustyn (440-250-1742)

Groundwater Treatment Construction Start, Peerless Plating Co. Superfund Site, Muskegon, Michigan

During the week of May 1, 2000, the U.S. EPA began construction on the groundwater portion of the remedial action at the Peerless Plating Superfund site in Muskegon, Michigan. The groundwater is contaminated with both organic and inorganic contamination. A groundwater extraction and treatment system is being constructed to remediate contaminated groundwater. Six groundwater extraction wells with combined total capacity of 165 gallons per minute will be installed. Extracted groundwater will be treated onsite using chemical precipitation and air stripping. Construction was originally scheduled to begin in November 1999, however, extensive soil contamination was discovered in the area where the treatment building was to be located. The contaminated soils have been excavated and will be disposed offsite. The groundwater treatment system should be operating by September 30, 2000.

Contact: Mike Ribordy (312-886-4592)

Settlement, BP Exploration & Oil, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio

On May 26, 2000, U.S. EPA filed a Consent Agreement and Final Order to resolve the Administrative Complaint against BP Exploration & Oil, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio. The Complaint cited 23 bulk storage terminals located throughout Ohio. These facilities failed to submit a completed Emergency and Hazardous Chemical Inventory Form to the State Emergency Response Commission, the Local Emergency Planning Committee, and the local fire department with jurisdiction over the facility, by the March 1st deadline for calendar years 1994-1996. BP Exploration has agreed to pay \$115,002 to the General Treasury. Their payment is due in 30 days, along with a Certification of Compliance.

Contact: James Entzminger (312-886-4062)

Record of Decision Signed, Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund Site, Sheboygan, Wisconsin

On May 12, 2000, the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed for the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The ROD calls for the removal of approximately 21,000 cubic yards of sediment from the Upper River, removal of flood plain soil, removal of approximately 53,000 cubic yards of sediment from the Inner Harbor, and identification and control of possible additional polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) sources from the site facility. Removal of the PCB contaminated sediment and soil will result in a soft sediment surface weighted average concentration 0.5 parts per million or less over time. Long-term monitoring, for the entire River, includes both sediment and fish. The estimated cost of the remedy is \$40.9 million.

Contact: Tom Short (312-353-8826)

Remedial Investigation Start, Evergreen Manor Groundwater Contamination Site, Winnebago County, Illinois

On May 22, 2000, the U.S. EPA Region 5, began remedial investigation (RI) activities at the Evergreen Manor Groundwater Contamination site located in Winnebago County, Illinois. The groundwater is contaminated with

trichloroethene and tetrachloroethene in excess of their Maximum Contaminant Levels under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The RI will involve collecting groundwater samples using a cone penetrometer and U.S. EPA's mobile lab to attempt to fully delineate the extent of groundwater contamination at the site. Residential well, sediment, and surface water samples will also be collected. U.S. EPA will use this information to determine whether any further action is necessary to protect human health and the environment once the ongoing non-time-critical removal action (NTCRA) is complete. The NTCRA is a water main extension project which will bring potable water from the North Park Public Water District to approximately 260 individual residences threatened by contaminated water.

Contact: Mike Ribordy (312-886-4592)

Preconstruction Meeting and Availability Session, Reilly Tar & Chemical (Dover Plant) Superfund Site, Dover, Ohio

On May 17, 2000, the Remedial Project Manager (RPM) along with representatives from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) and Reilly Industries held a preconstruction meeting at the Reilly Tar & Chemical (Dover Plant) Superfund site in Dover, Ohio. August Mack, hired by Reilly Industries, will manage the construction project. Also on May 17, 2000, the RPM, State Project Manager, and Reilly met with the City's Mayor and his staff to discuss the project and schedule. Later that evening, U.S. EPA held an availability session to provide the public with an opportunity to ask questions about the site remedy. In addition to interested citizens, representatives from the local newspaper and radio station came to the meeting. The 3.7 acre site contains coal tar, contaminated soil, and sediment. Much of the excavated material will be placed in an abandoned building foundation on site and then covered with a Ohio Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Subtitle D Solid Waste Cap. A soil cover will be placed over the remainder of the site. A collection trench will also be installed for hydraulic control and to treat contaminated groundwater in the perched aquifer. Treated groundwater will be sent to the local publicly owned treatment works. The estimated cost of the remedy is \$2.8 million and is expected to be completed in September 2000.

Contact: Tom Short (312-353-8826)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES**EPCRA/CERCLA Section 103/Clean Air Act 122(r) National Enforcement Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada**

On May 16-18, 2000, Mark Horwitz, Ruth McNamara, and James Entzminger, from the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), along with Ed Messina from the Office of Regional Counsel, attended the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)/Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Section 103/Clean Air Act (CAA) 122(r) National Enforcement Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Representatives from 9 of the 10 U.S. EPA Regions were in attendance, along with Jesse Baskerville, Director, Toxics and Pesticides Enforcement Division, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance. The first day of the conference dealt with the EPCRA/CERCLA enforcement issues, the most significant of which was the recently released "Interim Guidance on Federally Permitted Releases." Implementation of this guidance, according to Lynn Beasley of the Office of Emergency and Remedial Response (OERR), could lead to increased industry filings under the Continuous Release Program, which is not well positioned to handle the increased work load. The second day of the meeting focused on regional status reports. Mr. Baskerville was quite impressed by the various EPCRA/CERCLA enforcement efforts currently underway or planned by the Region 5 staff. The final day of the conference addressed the CAA 112(r) issues. A preliminary draft of an enforcement response policy was distributed. Other topics that were discussed were expedited enforcement, non-filer inspections, and a blanket waiver of CAA 113(d)(1) requirements.

Contact: Mark Horwitz (312-353-9045)

Presentation, Air and Waste Management Association Conference, Livonia, Michigan

On May 24, 2000, James Entzminger, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention, gave a presentation on the continuous release provisions under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), and also about Federally permitted release interpretative guidance. There were about 150 people from industry, U.S. EPA, and the Michigan Department of Natural

Resources (MDNR) in attendance. MDNR gave a presentation about emerging issues and the electrical utilities industry.

Contact: James Entzminger (312-886-4062)

Meeting, Southeast Michigan Environmental Health Directors, Pontiac, Michigan

On May 11, 2000, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Bob Buckley attended the monthly meeting of the Southeast Michigan Environmental Health Directors's, which consists of representatives from 13 Counties and the City of Detroit. The theme for the meeting, chaired by Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, was pollution prevention. A discussion of the Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program (RETAP), which provides pollution prevention assistance to small businesses, was made. OSC Bob Buckley expressed concern to the group about the rash of mercury releases. That afternoon Wayne County called for Hg assistance and the next day Macomb County called. At the same time, there were ongoing Hg responses in Monroe County and the City of Detroit and a minor incident in Lapeer County.

Contact: Bob Buckley (734-692-7662)

Meeting, Region 5 Regional Response Team (RRT), Cincinnati, Ohio

On May 16-17, 2000, there was a meeting of the Region 5 Regional Response Team (RRT) in Cincinnati, Ohio. All six Region 5 States and 10 federal agencies attended this meeting. Region 5 attendees included Cheryl McIntyre and Byron Maggos of the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP). There was a presentation on recent oil tank failures along the Ohio River. A panel discussed a case study on environmental crimes. There was a presentation on Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel by Ralph Dollhopf, Kurt Grunert, and Steve Renninger all of the Emergency Response Branch (ERB). Steve Renninger and Len Zintak (ERB) spoke on Counter Terrorism and the recent anthrax responses in the Cincinnati area. Ann Whelan (Oil Planning and Response Section) gave an update on area planning activities and Steve Renninger gave an update on the Cincinnati sub-area plan. There was also a State run session on methamphetamine labs, during which Region 7 gave a presentation on U.S. EPA's involvement in the cleanup

of these labs. Gary Goldberg (Department of Energy) presented a National Response Team committee report on reconciling the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan and the National Contingency Plan. The next RRT meeting will be held in Appleton, Wisconsin on September 27-28, 2000. The meeting will be in conjunction with the Wisconsin Governors Conference.

Contacts: Sheila Calovich (312-353-1505)
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**Joint Region 3,4,5 Regional Response Team (RRT) Meeting,
Cincinnati, Ohio**

On May 18, 2000, there was a combined Region 3, 4, & 5 Regional Response Team (RRT) meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, following the Region 5 RRT meeting. This particular meeting was significant because, not only was it hosted in Region 5, but it included representatives from three U.S. EPA Regions (Regions 3, 4 and 5), representatives from 19 states, and representatives from the National Response Team. Region 5 attendees included Cheryl McIntyre and Byron Maggos of the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP). The theme of the Joint RRT meeting was planning, response, and coordination along the Ohio River. There was a Ohio River planning panel which included speakers from Region 5. Those participating in that panel were Steve Renninger (Emergency Response Branch), Ann Whelan and Sheila Calovich of the (Oil Planning and Response Section). Ann Whelan made a presentation on the Region 5 electronic maps for the Eastern and Middle Ohio River. There was also a discussion on the Region 3, 4, and 5 Response Memorandum of Understanding, which will help expedite response on the Ohio River. The Deputy Regional Administrator, Mr. David A. Ullrich, opened the meeting. There were approximately 150 participants.

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